FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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GUEST EDITORIAL

EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE

Experience God's love. God's love abounds in all His creation. It has no limit, no confining. It is present in the darkness as well as the light. It permeates all life—outward, inward. It shines as the sunlight and pervades all, like the atmosphere. It is healing, renewing, inspiring, everywhere present, always powerful.

Yet I know so little of His love, I possess so little of its power, its fullness, its healing. So I endeavor to teach myself how to feel His love, how to experience His compassion, how to accept His full forgiveness, how to give Him all that is within me, good or bad, and receive within myself all that He has to give me. "Give for myself Thyself," prays one of His disciples.

So I get quiet within—a deep restfulness pervades my soul: like the surface of a deep crater lake, so deep it lies between protecting mountains that no ripple disturbs its surface. It is calm and serene, and the reflection is perfect—blue sky, white clouds, purple mountains, trees on the edge. So in this silence, serenity, peace, I look into the Master's face and begin to reflect Him. I begin to feel His love, compassion, strength, enablement. Putting aside self, I accept Him. I renounce the world and take His righteousness. I abandon all self-love, and allow Him to fill me with His love, with Himself.

Thus I become love—for one moment, for sixty seconds, I am lost in Him. Not contemplating, just feeling, just being, just absorbed by and surrounded with His presence. Light, love, peace, quietness, serenity—this is all I am conscious of. Thus I drink in His love. Thus I allow His love to heal my inner need, to forgive and cleanse, to inspire and renew. And thus I experience in a new way His limitless Love.

— *Mildred Long*

* * *

THE JOY OF EASTER MORNING

Emma S. McLaughlin

He lives!
The streak of early sunlight waking me
tells me He lives.
The daffodils are trumpeting the news
across the open tomb of greening earth -
He lives!
The cardinal is calling from the pine,
over and over, joyous in refrain -
He lives! He lives!
Murmurous above a crocus bloom,
a little bee assures me it is so.
He lives!

I see it in the laughing eyes of children
who search for eggs beneath the shrubbery -
in the faces of fond parents
who watch their happiness,
hear their glad shouts with each
discovered treasure.
I see it in gay dresses, bright new shoes
and hats abloom with flowers.
He lives!

I hear it in the trumpets heralding
the hour of sunrise -
in music pouring from the radio
with the first hint of light.
I hear it in the pealing of the bells
that sound the joyful news from every steeple -
in the uplifted voices of the choirs.
I hear it in spontaneous exchange
of friend to happy friend -
"He lives!" "He lives indeed."

Let all men sing His praises
and all the bells ring joy.
Let our thanks overflow;
in spite of famine, ravages of war —
in spite of sickness, poverty and greed
HE CONQUERED DEATH — and we became the heirs
to EVERLASTING LIFE.

✠ ✠ ✠

A PSALM FOR 1973

Catherine Cabeen Houck

We have glorifed Thee, O Lord, we have shouted, "Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest."
We have not listened to our own words, we have not known their meaning.
Now, we pray, "Help us, O Lord."
As we approach the final period of Thy son's life on earth keep us from making it a planned procession, a display of protocol and accustomed ceremony.
But guide us into making it an act of praise, a calling on Thee for assistance.
For Thou hast delivered us from our troubles. Thou hast granted us cessation of war and given us the beginning of peace.
Guide us in righteous paths, strengthen our faith that we may obtain Thy mercy.
When we cry, "Hosanna, Hosanna," let our voices ring out clear and strong, not for one day but for all days without beginning or end.
And grant, O Lord, that the cry, "Crucify him, crucify him", may never again be heard in our land.
Hear us in the name of Him who gave His life, help us we pray.

RUBICONS TO CROSS

Carla Patsuris

When she was five, unwanted and unloved, Diane
Ran away.

Away from the green-trimmed house on a hill
South and West of two red barns;
Through the fallow grazing-field and past
The orchard deep with fragrant cider-trees

She ran

Companioned only by her silent "Our Father"
And a hope that Mama would soon-in tears-
Come searching for her little missing girl.

Then the sun, an orange bead, vanished into night's
Dark cauldron's ten thousand noises
Tormenting and quickening Diane's pulse with a rush
Of alien apparitions
compelling her flight
Back along an orchard of ghosts where owls,
Falling fruit, shadows and ogres were one;
And on through the chilling dew-dampened field

Back to Mama.

"Mama, I ran away. Mama, Mama."

"You? When? I never noticed."

* * *

Though voices fade and in the distance words are lost
Every dreaded new rejection kindles
In her heart a flame close to equinox
And Diane is hurting-years old again
for life.

SECRETS IN THEIR HEARTS

A Story by Elizabeth H. Emerson

Last Easter, and on many earlier Easters, the beloved pastor of St. Matthew's had concluded his sermon with the same invitation:

"Let every person in this large assembly who has ever sung the 'Hallelujah Chorus' of *The Messiah* come to the choir loft and join the quartet in this glorious experience."

The response was always instantaneous. Young and old filled the large loft space to overflowing, and their many voices lifted the standing audience to new heights of Easter joy.

On this Easter day the members of the church's quartet, which served in place of a choir, were resplendent in their off-white robes trimmed in gold. The organist, acknowledged the best in the city, was more soberly attired; she was serving her thirty-eighth year at St. Matthew's. These five were in their places but not one of them was really present except in body.

Ella Hampton, contralto, was reliving in her thoughts the events of the night before, hearing her words to Jim after he had asked her for the third time to marry him. "No, no!" she had cried as she ran from him into a far room of her apartment, slamming the door and locking it. She stood, trembling, listening to Jim's slow steps going down the hall into the elevator. . . and realizing that she had closed the door on all her hopes and dreams. Why? Her doubts and fears had made her say no when her heart said yes. If only he had turned back and given her a last chance to run into his arms. He had gone. He would not come again.

After a sleepless night, with the bitter thought, 'The Easter show must go on,' she groomed herself carefully as always, and warmed up her voice. And here she was—in body.

Yesterday afternoon when Harvey Mead returned from the doctor's office, his wife Lydia was away. He was not sorry. He went to his desk, sat down heavily before it, opened a certain drawer, and looked through the accumulation of old church bulletins. He sorted

out those where his name appeared opposite the opening solo of *The Messiah*. He counted thirty-nine. He remembered the first time. How he shook! He couldn't have brought much comfort to anyone. But on later occasions, in the stillness which always preceded those two beautiful words, he felt a warm response—sometimes even tears.

Once Lydia said, "Harvey, you sing the 'Comfort Ye' better since you put on weight. Every year your voice is richer. Easter wouldn't seem like Easter if you didn't sing that."

Harvey would sing it this time. He would not tell Lydia of the doctor's verdict until later. Their married children were coming home. Let the day be a happy one.

Now, sitting here through the organ prelude (how well Miss Marby was playing!), he wondered whether he had done right. If he had told Lydia, her eyes would now be saying clearly from the fifth row where she always sat, 'If this is the last time, Harvey, make it the best. Sing for everybody, but especially for me."

Ernie Standish was a comparative newcomer to the quartet and he had never recovered from his initial fright. Today he wondered if he could possibly get through his solo. He could not even put his mind on the words..

After last night's quarrel—the fifth serious one in as many days or nights—he had thrown a few necessary belongings, including his copy of *The Messiah*, into a bag, and left Irma, the woman he had promised to love and cherish always. Before this Easter Day should end, he must find her. They would have to sit down together like mere acquaintances and decide what to do next. Unless, of course, Irma had already left the city.

Well, this hour, with his solo, the other music, the sermon, and the 'Hallelujah Chorus'—what a farce to sing it today!—would pass. Then what? Division of possessions? Court action? The final decree? Probably after that, he would go away. There would be no trouble in replacing him in the quartet; good basses were plentiful. Now, if it were Harvey who was dropping out....

Myra Trenton, soprano, had buried her sorrow deep. She was sure

that no one could guess from her appearance that she had one. For the length of the service, at least, she would make herself think of something else.

Why, she asked herself, was she the recognized leader of the quartet? It was she who, with Miss Marby's agreement, made all the decisions for the music. It was her idea to use *The Messiah* selections for Easter. Had her experience in bringing up five children since the early death of their father made her seem dictatorial?

Myra knew she had succeeded well with four of the five. Why had she failed with the youngest son? In this failure lay her grief. There had been no sudden rupture with him; the breach had widened gradually as she saw Tom take one wrong turn after another, ignoring her protests. Pride had kept her lips closed outside of the home; no one knew.

The climax had come last night when Tom was carried in, senseless, by two who saw him fall. During this very hour he was alone, sleeping it off. Why had she left him? It would have been a relief to have called the minister and said, "My son is home dead drunk. I can't sing today."

But no. She was here, waiting to sing her well-loved solo, 'Come Unto Him.' The pain which she had thought lay crushed inside was rising, rising, choking her.

The minister had offered his prayer. Ella had sung 'He Shall Feed His Flock'—never more movingly—and her own moment had come. The only way she could get through it was to sing it to herself: "Come unto Him, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." Oh, who so heavy laden as she?

The pastor, Jonathan Stephens, black-robed, was standing behind the mahogany pulpit flanked on either side by masses of white lilies. He opened his black notebook and stood so long without speaking that the church officials moved uneasily.

"Friends," he said, "I prepared a sermon for you, suited for this occasion. If any of you feel, when the hour ends, that you

have been cheated, I shall gladly lend you my full notes. Today I shall not need them."

Mr. Stephens closed the notebook slowly. There was a stirring in the audience. What was happening to St. Matthew's well-ordered Easter service?

"My sermon was to be about the joy of Easter," he said. "In preparation I read all the familiar passages about joy. Jesus talked about it. He felt joy and he wanted his followers to feel it. Once he spoke of 'my joy in you.' But I shall not talk about his joy today. There were times when, for Jesus, joy seemed very far away. Once, when he was in the garden, he prayed, 'Let this cup pass from me.' Where was joy then?

"Most of us at some time drink from bitter cups. I have a friend who had a fine family, a beautiful home, good position, prosperity. His cup seemed to overflow with the sweet wine of life. But recently, traveling in a far country with wife and youngest son, a senseless accident crushed the leg of that son beyond healing. Today my friend drinks the cup of sorrow.

"Yesterday I read about a young woman in this city who saw the whole structure of her love and marriage come tumbling down. Today I know that she is crying, 'Let this cup pass from me.'

"Some cups overflowing with bitterness are thrust suddenly into hands; some fill gradually, a drop today, a drop tomorrow. Some people who are old and all alone come to the place where they almost know the supreme loneliness which Jesus knew when his three closest friends went to sleep while he prayed.

"On the cross, while Jesus was drinking the cup of physical agony, he was conscious of the cup of guilt which sooner or later those who put him there would drink—and he drank it, too, for them. He knew that there is no more bitter cup than that filled with guilt, and he prayed, 'Father, forgive them.' In a way, Peter and Judas had helped to put him on the cross, so they were included in this prayer. Was he, indeed, praying for all who feel guilt?

"My friends, if you feel only joy on this beautiful Easter Day, I fear what I have said has not seemed to be for you."

This time when the minister paused, there was no restless-

ness. A light seemed to fall upon his face as he continued:

"Perhaps a year from now I shall preach the sermon I made ready for today. But now I want to say something about a word stronger, sweeter than joy. That word is *peace*. Jesus said, 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.' How could he have peace to give away? How could he have it for himself?

"I am not, as you know, a highly trained theologian. I am only one who, like many of you, has drunk the cup of guilt and sorrow; I may have read and pondered on the words of Jesus a little more than most of you. It seems to me that he found peace in the garden when he could say, 'Thy will, not mine be done.' He reached it on the cross with the words, 'Into thy hands'. . . . I know no other way to share his peace. So to you, my people, I say earnestly, 'May the peace of God keep your hearts.' "

The minister sat down. It was time for the 'Hallelujah Chorus' but he made no announcement of it. The organist did not forget, but she knew she could not play it now. Her cup of 'supreme loneliness' had been filling through all her years; today it was overflowing. She had hardly heard the words about peace, but there was a chorus in *The Messiah* which she *could* play. Without even a glance at Myra Trenton she turned the pages in the score and began to play the first chords. The quartet listened, amazed; then with one accord they began to sing, 'Surely, surely, he hath borne our griefs and sorrows.' And those in the congregation who knew the words joined softly, 'Surely, surely. . . .'

Afterwards, some remembered and thought it a little strange that their pastor had not stood at the door as they left. But all—organist, quartet, and congregation—felt that a great washing of peace had flowed over them. And the minister, Jonathan Stephens? Those closest to him thought that perhaps he felt it most of all.

Monday's papers carried no report of the Easter service at St. Matthew's. But some readers saw a death notice: Mark Stephens, only son of the Reverend Jonathan Stephens, who was stationed with the Army in Germany, had been killed in an accident, according to a cablegram received early Sunday morning by his family.

AND COMFORT FOR YOUR SLEEPING

Bettie M. Sellers

How beautiful Margaret's place in early spring!
Supple branches of long-limbed azalea bend
and cover greyed marble
bright with coral petals.
Shading living bush and woman two centuries dead,
a massive oak supports wistaria climbing,
years-thick like great encircling arms
that lean out
offering violet clusters
to sweeten her long rest
and assuage my present fear.

EASTER MELODY

Alice Mackenzie Swaim

Now spring comes dancing down the lilac lane
And shakes forsythia's small golden bells;
Across the valley floor and hillside swells
The tide of Easter melody again.
The wrens and mockingbirds all make it plain
In every burst of song; soft sun dispels
The winter dark and gloom; each tulip tells
Of life and hope reborn — spring's glad refrain.
The Lord is risen; the great stone rolled away,
We dare to dream a brighter, nobler day
And find our faith renewed without a flaw,
A time when sin and evil will withdraw.
Like Mary in that garden on its hill,
May we, too, walk uplifted, calm and still.

OLD STAVE CHURCH, NORWAY

Everard Thomson

A serpent, representing evil, stands
Outside, to such the doors are massive stone.
With deep religious and artistic sense
The builders climbed a mountain in their quest
For timber from the oldest, tallest trees,
And when the wood was petrified, they built
A house of worship strong as their belief.

Wall paintings in the nave depict some scenes
From Passion of the Christ, there are no pews,
So people knelt devoutly on the floor.
Upon a farm a font was found, reviled,
It had become a feeding trough for pigs,
And as the workers placed it in the church,
One of them quoted fitting words of Christ,
"Cast not your pearls before swine."

They also built for brotherhood, a slot
Out in the wall allowed the lepers to
Worship with those who need not cry "Unclean!"

TO LIVE HIS WILL

Helen Gee Woods

Unless I share the dawn of each new day
with friends and ones less fortunate than I,
and give a helping hand to serve and to pray
that human needs be met along the way,
I dare not meet the Master eye to eye,
nor touch His garment's hem unless I try
to live His Will in deeds as well as pray.

RAINBOWS OF HOPE

(Easter Flower Show - Buffalo Greenhouse)

Rose Noller

A walk into a wilderness is this:
Of color-music, a jewel treasury,
A sun of daffodils, an unseen bliss
And path of tuneful multiplicity;
A pure-white "Joan of Arc"; a "Carnival"
And "Rain" of "Wonder" — cineraria
By human unpolluted, — original,
An image of a visioned area. . .
Flowers are a speech, harboring
No evil; dying but come again
In perfect joy and spring awakening, —
A patient memory to the minds of men;
The spectrum song of melting snow and bird;
Some Notes of the Unseen Creative Word!

SAUL AND DAVID

Liston Pope, Jr.

O aging king, the shadows lengthen slowly on the land;
Gaze deep into the fame you gave your chosen youth to win.
The forms you cherished vanish, and another's magic hand
Has touched the curing strings and sought a god to soothe your pain

O impotent one! Clutch your spear! Ward off household foes!
Parry the tragic fact that fills your spirit with such fear!
Young David's fingers move amidst the silence of the rose,
He lives to pluck the secret balm, to gather music's cure.

It is time, O king, the languid sun has fallen to the sword.
Now turn your back on life, and leave the gray infirmity
Which staked your spirit's vicious game, endangering the Word.
There's banished beauty there beyond your own imagining.

LOUIS CONDÉ-LAHISSA'S

"THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION"

With a note by Ellen Gibbs

(Lahissa—spiritual lama from Tibet—brought to the Western world of 1875 concepts so far ahead of their time that they are just now receiving acceptance. Lahissa was not of any one religion, but understood the principles back of all religions. He taught the power of thought. In the United States he became known as Dr. Louis Condé. He devoted his life here to teaching, counseling, and healing mankind—all faiths and races, the rich and poor alike. Though this humble teacher did not become famous or start a movement of his own, it can be readily seen that today's thinking has developed along the lines that he set forth. He died in 1931. In 1954 a book of some of Louis Condé-Lahissa's outstanding teachings was published under the title of Life Is As You Give It.)

In the peace and quiet of this moment, I am in tune with Universal Mind or God, whose Laws are the universal spiritual laws that govern me and all things. I am one with this Universal Mind—I am a part of It—as a drop of water is a part of the ocean.

I give thanks for the world teachers who have brought mankind the eternal truths—for Jesus Christ and the other great prophets who before and since His time have lived among us and showed us the Way.

Humbly, as a child, I seek a better understanding of the universal spiritual laws so I may live in closer harmony with them.

I realize the Law of Compensation is inevitable: that as I give to Life and my fellow man, so shall I receive from Life and my fellow man—just *as* I give.

It behooves me then to obey that great Law of Compensation by giving happiness to everyone who comes in contact with me: by giving them constructive words, kind, encouraging words, helpful words. Thus I will be deserving of the *best* there is to be had in life, and whenever I need, that need will be supplied.

I realize I am not here to live within myself, with a wall around me; but rather to *love* and render *service* to my fellow man. I will therefore make every effort to understand myself, the powers that lie within me, and to develop those powers to my own good and the good of all. Thus I will be able to be of greater service —able to fulfill the purpose in Life for which God has placed me here-

Now, and from this moment on, with tolerance and forgiveness toward all, I send forth love to all beings everywhere, giving them in spirit and in thought the best there is in me.

HERE AND NOW *Winifred Hamrick Farrar*

Another time, another place,
Could bring release;
A look at my Redeemer's face
Would give me peace.

But here and now the white dogwood
Will have to do;
Against blue sky its glory should
Proclaim Him true. . .

This Easter white reminding me
Of perfect love:
Forgiving once the parent tree,
He left the Dove.

PEACE PILGRIM

You may see her walking through your town or along the highway —a silver-haired woman dressed in navy blue slacks and shirt and a short tunic with pockets all around the bottom in which she carries her only worldly possessions. On the front of her tunic white letters introduce PEACE PILGRIM and on the back they explain: 25,000 MILES ON FOOT FOR WORLD PEACE. Starting twenty years ago, she had walked the 25,000 miles by 1964. However, she continues to walk, for her vow is: "I shall remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace, walking until I am given shelter and fasting until I am given food." She walks without a penny in her pockets and she is not affiliated with any organization. She walks as a prayer—as a chance of inspiring others to pray and work for lasting peace. Her sixth pilgrimage will take her this year to California, Oregon, Washington, and Nevada; in 1974 to Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico; in 1975 to Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas; in 1976 to Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, and Alabama; ending in 1977 in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virgina, D.C., Maryland, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Florida. If you would like to invite her to speak in your town or share a meal or stay in your home, you can write to her % her forwarding address, which is: Cologne, New Jersey 98213.

INNER PEACE (My Son)

Gloria A. Martin

The wisdom written in his eyes
Belies his tender age.
The inner peace upon his face
Is as a Bible page.

His childish voice emits but love,
His tender smile is true.
His loving heart expresses truth,
Without a verbal clue.

FLIGHT OF TIME

William Walter De Bolt

The flight of time adds beauty to a stream
once known in childhood as it onward goes
like one pursuing flashes of a dream
repudiating haste. Even the foes
of wine know it is better after years
pass by and leave it richer than a king
with taste unspoiled by illness. Cheese
appears
improved with days and has the gift to
bring
enough enjoyment to enhance a nook
of pleasure. The conniving decades lend
laurels of effort to a worthy book
and mission and prestige in season send.
Only to persons modeled after me
is age the ogre of reality.

OAK LEAVES UNTIL SPRING

A Short Story

by Eleanor Ebersole

The green pine that lived on the mountain grew sad. No one was about any more. The tall trees were sleeping, their leaves had fallen and their work was done. All was silent and dark.

The green pine wished a wish of its own all winter long. The problem was that the pine wished for bright golden colors to accompany it beyond the Fall, but where to hang these colors, and how to keep them bright, were questions not easy for the mountain to answer.

The mountain called its folk together and asked who would volunteer to change its color and its plan of sleep so that the pine would not be alone.

"Well," said the maple, "I will. It doesn't matter to me."

So that year the mountain maple changed its leaves. It grew bright golden colors and tied them on tight to last as long as they could.

"Thank you," said the pine. "Thank you for the company."

But the maple finally fell asleep and so its leaves dropped to their bed on earth.

Another council was called in the spring. A new volunteer was found. The oak. No one had thought of the oak before. It offered to hold on tight to its russet red leaves almost until the new ones came.

So it was agreed. The golden maple would brighten the dark wood as long as it could before it had to sleep. Then in the stillness of winter the oak's leaves would deepen their color. And to add to their companionship their leaves crackled and chattered in the wind.

"Thank you," said the pine to the mountain. "Now you may return to your sleep, and I will keep warm all that venture to travel in the winter woods. And the oak will accompany me."

LIFE'S PRAYER

Robert A. Rothman

Life lived from year to year
With eyes forward and soul unbent;
Neither rushing to nor withdrawing
from each event;
Not weeping for the loss of yesteryear
That time has snatched,
not standing in paralyzed fear
Before a future unknown;
But with an unspent
Enthusiasm for life that is pent
Up, breaking out in song and cheer.
That is my prayer.

Let the road rise or fall,
No matter, I travel in joy.
The dreams, mine when I was a boy,
Hopes, aspirations, ideals all.
Within me conviction and courage,
Dedication for Youth and Age.
That is my life's prayer.

"AFTER ALL IS SAID AND DONE"

El Gilbert

If you asked me what life is,
I would have to answer:
His.

"I am trying to emphasize the similarities that have existed for more than twenty-five hundred years between the prophetic manifestations of the various still-living faiths....It is as if men had drilled wells of different kinds and depths, working in different layers of soil and rock—and had managed to tap a common source."

PROPHETIC RADICALISM

Herrymon Maurer

Part One

The fact is that we must first encounter God in fear. But the outside world does not go in for encounters, and it shrinks from fear. It is that world which holds to dogmatic ideas of every shape and sort, that world which holds down God, tries to sit on him, and literally sweats from its effort to push him underground. It is so idea-thirsty that it swallows a chaos of theories and gets positively drunk on conflicting ideas about religion, conflicting ideas about knowledge, conflicting ideas about history, conflicting ideas about every fact of daily life from the rearing of children to the running of governments. After all, when you sit dizzily amidst thoroughgoing confusion of notions and opinions, you can more easily overlook—or misstate—the singleness and the stubbornness of facts. Do you want to discuss the early literature of India? I assure you that you can take your pick of half a hundred systems of thought. And if you want to talk about something more immediate—the psychology of men and women, say —why, you will find as many different notions as there are library listings.

And yet it is this same world that drools every so often for sweet little ideas which do not differ from one another in any important particular. It is comfortable at times to think en masse; it is reassuring to have every so often the same ideas as every-

body else, or at least everybody with a proper education and a liberal outlook. If you want, I can get together half a hundred books on politics in China that are all the same book. Or if you want even wider unanimity, simply read up on nuclear physics, science fiction, or the serious novel—or better yet go see the moving picture.

Here is confusion where there should be united effort, unanimity where there should be difference. No encounters, no facts. Ideas either collide aimlessly with one another, or else they coagulate in a sticky mass.

Very well, let us assault this world; let us pound on its gates; let us testify within its walls. Let us point to the real, the concrete, the fact: in short, to God.

But who will assault it with us? Hardly the correct people or the respectable, for what is correctness and respectability but a decent attention to the ways of the world? And certainly not the outward churches, temples, and mosques or the directors or professors of them; not the places of learning or the men of thought. These people and these citadels of dogma are active in the conspiracy to keep facts out of sight.

In the face of all this refusal can we say we are right, that we know our inward certainties to be true? Are they true? Do I know that my specific I-know answers are true? Do not forget that I do not altogether like these facts and that the world rejects them out of hand. After all, our own inward certainties—precisely the ones that force us to decry our attempted escapes from truth—may perhaps be our own secret attempts to escape. Why, even our small wish to take hold of the truth may hide a mad desire to kick it loose. That would be corrupt even beyond the world's corruption. And how do we know that we aren't already corrupted? Experience becomes known to us within our personalities, which can welcome poison as enthusiastically as meat. What we need is a test.

There is a test. There is a recorded tradition of basic I-know experience to which we can relate our own experience. This tradition is longer and broader than our own intellectualized one, which stretches only a few hundred years. Since it is a living tradition, it is just as current.

This particular tradition springs up amongst the prophets. Historically, it sprang up for the first time half a millennium or more B.C. It was a time when the earlier tribal communities were breaking up, when men were ceasing to bow down before sticks and stones, when they were just beginning to discover their disturbing and colliding egos. At that time in various places all over the world certain men—charged with an energy they said came from the Primal and the Eternal—began to cry out in a loud voice what is today wrung from us in a whisper: that there is truth, that there is faith, that there is involvement of men with one another and of each man and all men with the Unknowable.

Prophetic radicalism is a convenient term for the teaching which welled out of the mouths of these men. It is radical in the sense that it is forever set against the world as it is: the world of deceits, oppressions, lusts. It is prophetic in the sense that it is set equally against priestliness, ritual, and outward authority, and against the lure of oracles and spiritualists and soothsayers. That men like the sixth-century prophet who spoke of foreknowledge as "the beginning of folly" at times spoke in an older oracular style is wholly incidental to their message that men must hold to God and do right. "When they tell you to consult mediums and ghosts that cheep and jibber in low murmurs," said Isaiah, "ask them if a nation should not rather consult its God."

Isaiah and the other prophets of Israel cried out, "Let us live by the light of the Eternal," and they warned, "If your faith does not hold, you will never hold out." Jesus said that whoever would seek to gain his life would lose it, and that whoever would lose it would gain it. These are great progenitors of a tradition that has never ceased to break out of the confining forms of Judaism and Christianity. But the tradition is broader than these faiths. There are other great progenitors, not simply Mohammed, a direct heir of the prophets of Israel, but also such distant teachers as Lao-tzu in China and Gautama in India. The prophetic so strongly stamps the higher religions that it forges links, invisible but also unbreakable, between them. Amongst the various branches of the prophetic tradition there is an inward similarity far more marked than all the multiplicity of outward form.

Few theologians of religion will not admit this similarity, nor will most scholars of it. Religion and scholarship alike fall too easily into the hands of exclusivists. And no religion, certainly, can dare to be exclusive. The man who says "Either my religion or no religion" immediately sets up an even more alarming either-or alternative concerning God. God is either the God of all men or he is the God of nobody. Should he refuse to make himself known to just anybody--if such a thing were imaginable—he would be diabolical, and atheism would be the only position in consonance with the experience of the prophets and the life and death of Jesus.

As for the scholars, their exclusiveness arises from the fact that most of them are expert—after the manner of the nineteenth-century pigeonholers of natural data—in elaborating differences between families of fruit flies, cranial measurements of bushmen, or the religions of mankind. We are dealing here with students not of comparative religion but of contrasting religions, such of them, at least, as lack an eye, an ear, and a heart for whole facts, in contrast to surface facts. The symbol of fullness, so meaningful to Jewish faith, is basically not very different from the symbol of emptiness, precious for Indian faith. For the Psalmist's "My cup runneth over," a Hindu would write, "My cup draineth out." Similarly, when Gautama's "noble eight-fold path" for non-attachment to the world and deliverance from sorrow is spelled out, Buddhist non-involvement in life looks not critically different from the involvement of Jews and Christians.

What, I ask, is to be made of a prophetic utterance such as the following?

The demonic people know not how to follow right or how to refrain from wrong; there is neither purity nor good conduct, nor truth in them. They say that 'this universe is without truth, without a basis, born of mutual union caused by lust. What else is there?' Holding this view, these ruined souls, of small understanding and of fierce deeds, rise as enemies of the world for its destruction. Filled with insatiable desires, possessed by

hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding evil fancies through delusion, they work with unholy resolve; . . . Self-glorifying, haughty, filled with the vanity and intoxication; . . . possessed by egoism, power, insolence, lust and anger, these maligant people hate Me in their own bodies and in those of others. . . .

The expert knows this jeremiad as a passage from the Bhagavad-Gita, that is, as one of the complex configurations of Hindu thought of two millenniums ago. Knowing that Hindu thought united in believing that the personal self would be absorbed into an impersonal One, the expert sees at once textual evidence of a gulf between Hinduism and Judaism. An evil-doing Jew, after all, would be described simply as disobedient to God, not as possessed by wrong speculations about the universe. Delusion would not be named a reason for his holding evil fancies. And no Jew, certainly, would imagine God in his body or in any other person's.

Such an analysis is accurate on the surface; it could, for all I know, be made the starting point for an argument on the utter uniqueness of Hinduism. But I am not moved by the analysis. On the contrary, I am struck to find a passage that has a force and flavor so remarkably close to that of the prophets of Israel.

I am also struck to find that God as Lao-tzu, the great Chinese Taoist, encountered him is in no sharp contrast to God as the great prophets of Israel encountered him. There is more talk in Lao-tzu of the qualities of God than there is in the prophetic books, but he does not stir from the same stand the prophets take themselves: he will not define Deity. Like them he does not even name it. He uses the term *Tao* (the Way), but he explains at once that "if its name can be named, it's not its name." Tao, in fact, is a term comparable not only to the Biblical "Way of God" but also to the not-to-be-pronounced JHVH. Even when it is described as the nonexistent from which comes the existent, there is still no real contrast, for the etymology of the two Chinese characters suggests that the ancient meaning of the first was "what disappears," while the meaning of the second was "what appears," meanings which are not dissimilar from transcendence

and imminence, and which strike one with somewhat the same force as God's description of himself to Moses: "I will-be-what-I-will-be." There is one point of real difference—the picture of Tao as a Mother, the only image Lao-tzu uses, in contrast to the Lord of Hosts, the only image consistently used by the prophets—and the difference makes Tao definitely less assertive and more passive in the world of creation than JHVH. But even this contrast loses force when I read of the everyday behavior in the world that Tao requires: "Exalt the low. Multiply the few. Requite injury with kindness. . . The mighty and great shall be laid low. The humble and weak shall be exalted. The Sage," says Lao-tzu, "does not take to hoarding. The more he lives for others, the richer he is. The more he gives, the more he receives." His denunciation of oppression has a most familiar ring.

The court is very clean and well-garnished,
But the fields are very weedy and wild,
And the granaries are empty!
They wear gorgeous clothes,
They carry sharp swords,
They surfeit themselves with food and drink,
They possess more riches than they can use!
Such persons are a prelude to outrageous discords!
As for Tao, what do they know about it?

*

Why are the people starving?
Because those above them are taxing them too heavily.
That is why they are starving.
Why are the people hard to manage?
Because those above them are fussy and have private ends to serve.
That is why they are hard to manage.
The people have simply nothing to live upon!

I am not trying to argue that the religions of the world should be mixed in a caldron, and that parts of the universal

amalgam be shipped all over the world. I am not trying to suggest that the chief end of man is to study comparative religion. I am not trying to overlook the widespread differences in outward appearances, often in basic motivations, that have kept various religions distinct. God is not changeable, but men at various times and places know him differently.

I am trying to emphasize the similarities that have existed for more than twenty-five hundred years between the prophetic manifestations of the various still-living faiths. There are a similarity of purpose and a similarity of style that make it possible to speak of a prophetic community as a fact, a community whose members are scattered in space, but who are united in their basic encounters with truth, with faith, with other men, with creation, with God. It is as if men had drilled wells of different kinds and depths, working in different terrains with different layers of soil and rock —and had managed to tap a common source.

The fact of community does not convey authority upon the prophetic radicals of the past. Certainty, awareness of truth—these are to be known only through each man's specific encounters with the given reality of the created world and with the direct reality given by the Creator himself and received in moments of muteness, agony, or joy. The prophetic community provides an inward, spiritual center where a man, no longer alone before truth, can compare his experiences with those of others, can strengthen his experiences by knowing theirs, can live and speak and act without paralyzing fear of having fallen into temptation instead of truth.

This community is the stronger in that it not only includes many places but many times. There may not be in our century world-shaking prophetic voices; there may not be prophets in the sense that there were in times past; but there is the prophetic, and there is also something that can be called the proohetic streak. Sometimes it has appeared in the most unforeseen places. In Paris before the wars, for instance, there was novelist Marcel Proust, a sick man naive in his obsession with time, childish in his indulgence in protracted self-examination, confused about love,

overemphatic about the abnormalities of sex, fearful of death. Yet this man, who could torture himself for half a thousand pages with thoughts of the faithlessness of a mistress who inspired neither pleasure nor love, possessed, as Edmund Wilson pointed out, "much of the capacity for apocalyptical moral indignation of the classical Jewish prophet."

Few novels have ever insisted so fiercely, so indignantly, and so satirically that the world of disillusion should be the world of the heart's desire. Confronted by evil, Proust made shreds of the ideas of the rich and the pretentions of persons of the middle sort, exposing foibles, false friendships, self-delusions and snobbisms. He turned many of his characters into moral grotesques and made them tumble down the stairs of disillusion, becoming with each bump more hideous morally and even more repulsive physically. Only once—and then only when he was reworking at the time of his own death the fictional episode on the death of the artist Bergotte—did he admit that there was truth, that there was God. But what an admission it was:

All that we can say is that there...is no reason inherent in the conditions of life on this earth that can make us consider ourselves obliged to do good, to be fastidious, to be polite even, nor make the talented artist consider himself obliged to begin over again a score of times a piece of work the admiration aroused by which will matter little to his body devoured by worms. . . . All these obligations which have not their sanction in our present life seem to belong to a different world, founded upon kindness, scrupulosity, self-sacrifice, a world entirely different from this, which we leave in order to be born into this world, before perhaps returning to the other to live once again beneath the sway of those unknown laws which we have obeyed because we bore their precepts in our hearts, knowing not whose hand had traced them there—those laws to which every profound work of the intellect brings us nearer and which are invisible only—and still—to fools.

No prophet, Proust obviously has a prophetic streak that fits even his ungainly and tortured personality into the prophetic

tradition.

There are, of course, no formal standards to determine what is prophetic, although one might point to a preoccupation with particular problems (not general ones: the prophetic is obdurately factual) coupled with a burning desire to recall men and women to hard and often bitter truth and thus to redeem them. But these characteristics are not the same thing as standards: standards, for example, such as are used to determine who are religious scholars, reformers, mystics, or saints. The ties that link men to the prophetic tradition are inward and intangible. There is a correspondence of tone, of style, of mood, and of approach with that of the early prophets, but there is not an identity of language or behavior or even formal belief. Proust is by no means an oddity that somehow displayed a prophetic streak. The very fact that the the prophetic in him was limited points to a particular characteristic of the prophetic tradition in latter-day times.

For, except in India, there have been of late no great prophetic lives. Jesus and the prophets of Israel are the living prophets of Christianity and of Judaism. It is an article of faith to Moslems that Mohammed is the one prophet. And so long as China survived as a cultural fact, Confucius, Lao-tzu, and Gautama were the living prophets of that culture. In India there had been great organizers, great thinkers, and great mystics; there had been frequent prophetic streaks; but there had been no great prophet. There was a void, and in the twentieth century Gandhi filled it. Unlike most of the great Hindus who lived before him, Gandhi drew no sharp line between this practical world and another timeless world. He was so concerned with man's involvement with man that he seemed to some Westerners to be more a politician than a prophet and to others more a Christian than a Hindu. There were indeed strong Christian and Jewish forces that worked upon him. Yet in his expression of his central faith—Truth, nonviolence, simplicity—Gandhi was profoundly Hindu. His words reached and stirred the masses of the Indian people more profoundly than any appeal ever made to them. Composed largely in the English language, the words sound to some Westerners intensely social without being scientifically sociological. Yet they strike repeatedly

a religious note common to the Hindu tradition, and they rest on demonstrably Hindu beliefs as, for instance, the unity of all human souls in the All or—as Gandhi called it—Truth. That interested Westerners find little that is foreign in Gandhi's Hindu beliefs argues the inward similarity of prophetic Hinduism and the prophetic traditions of Judaism and Christianity.

One reason why non-Hindus have been slow to see Gandhi as the Hindu prophet is, of course, because they have great prophets of their own. After great prophets, there is no need for more prophets. But there is great and continuing need for the prophetic streak, for a prophetic witness, for a prophetic ministry. During our millennium this need has not been altogether fulfilled by big religious organizations, within which the prophetic, while ever-present, is so diffused that it is difficult to isolate. These organizations are held together by priestly ritual and by the high reasoning of theology,, not by anything so lowly as concrete given fact. Their size, furthermore, itself inclines them to adjustment to the world as it is; it would be institutionally embarrassing—even somewhat contradictory—were they to set themselves as groups radically over against the world as it is.

(From PROPHETIC RADICALISM, published by Harper & Row. Used by permission of the author.)

(Part Two of this article will be published in the June issue)

PENSIVE PRAYER *Aarno Davidson*

O Lord, don't let
me ever hate and lie,
or pridefully
parade in vaunting dress
with those inured
to hurt and vilify.
Help me to master
compassion and humbleness!

POETRY *Virgina Lytle Waller*

a bridge,
likens past
to present,
spans generations
to bring you to me.

FOLLOWING

Paul Salyers

Everything follows something,
The shepherd
Follows the cow.
Sunlight follows daybreak
The furrow
Follows the plow.

Trials follow sadness,
The rainbow
Follows the rain,
Contentment follows gladness
And sickness
Follows pain.

Everyone follows someone,
The children
Dad or Mother.
We should follow Jesus
Much more than
Any other.

LEGEND OF A SEED

Josephine H. Voracek

A tiny seed fell by a garden wall,
So quietly no one heard it fall.
A withered drab pod, seemingly dead,
With life entombed in its dark bed.
Warm balmy days quickly sped by,
Gray clouds hovered in the sky.
Snow fell, spreading a blanket of white,
Over the seed and hid it from sight.
Throughout winter, the tiny seed slept,
While all around cold winds swept.
Rain, hail and sleet it did not hear.
Slumbered peacefully without fear.
Winter passed, and then came Spring,
And new life surged through everything.
Again the air was filled with song
Of birds that sang the whole day long.
And close beside the garden wall
The tiny seed stood big and tall!
On the tip of its sturdy green stem
Perched a tiny bud, a precious gem.
As the bud unfolded its petals rare
And spread perfume for all to share,
A pair of eyes gazed out in space,
For hidden inside was God's sweet face.

FOR A BRIGHTER DAY *Sue L. Christian*

Don't forget to pray
For the ones not attuned
To God's way.

WE'LL LOOK FOR YOU

Fitz-Hugh Ball Marshall

My friend must leave this gentle earth,
This smiling land that gave him birth,
And on a voyage set sail
For that remote and distant bourne
From which none, like us, yet return,
Or send us any mail.

And though, God knows, we're loath to part
Because affection fills the heart
Of friendship through the years—
We say goodbye and shake the hand
Of comradeship, and understand.

Strong men must not shed tears
If those with whom we love to go
Along the course of life below
Must leave for a new tryst,
With others, on another shore,
Who one by one went on before
Into the shining mist.
And so I say to him, "God speed!
May Jesus fill thine every need.
And when we follow on
Into the dimmer mist and night
To seek the Harbor of Delight,
We'll look for you, at Dawn!"

✠ ✠ ✠

NEVER ENDING *Jaye Giammarino*

Withheld,
love is the bread
that gives no nourishment—
leaves hunger rooted deep within
the soul.

Given,
love is the tide
that moves unto a law
returning again and again
to shore.

THE TAPESTRY OF LIFE *F. Bernadette Turner*

Peering into Candlelight
    while flickering shadows play upon the tinted wall—
Brings back memories.
Light and shadows interweave the Tapestry of Life;
Threads of Gold and Silver wend their way through Life's design.
Joys and sorrows intermingle through the passing of the years,
But Joy would lose its luster
    without a sprinkling of our tears.
Peering into Candlelight
    reveals the longings of the Soul—
The things in Life we cherish most and could not have
    and things that may yet come
Blend in hopeful Solitude.
The hours pass in musings sweet.
The evening fades into the night.
How beautiful the Candlelight--
    The Tapestry of Life.

THE SOUL OF A MAN

Lillian Hammer

Do not shrink from the rags
That robe the frail body
And wobbling legs—
For there is a soul
Of a man. . .

Beneath, there is a heart
That beats—
A dream that flickers,
In the memory, of the past;
In his fading mind.

"SEEK AND YE SHALL FIND!"

Martha Fowler Reichle

My thoughts seek for paths
that lead to inner contentment
through fields of wonder.

Towering mountains
stretch rock fingers heavenward
in supplication.

Throughout the Gospel
runs a golden thread of truth
uniting all men.

Prayer is the key
which opens Heaven's floodgates
and pours strength in me!

GUIDE ME, LORD *Viola Jacobson Berg*

I'm prone to stumble, Lord.
I straighten up, and then
My wayward feet are weak
And down I go again.

I cannot trust my strength,
I need a stronger hand
To steady halting steps,
To show me how to stand.

You know the way, dear Lord,
Where I just blunder through.
So may I take Your hand
And walk along with You?

THE HEART OF GOD

Marjorie Sharp Carter

I sailed on wings of prayer into the night. .
Above the peaks, beyond Eternity. . . .
Between the stars I soared to lucent Light.
Deep in the Heart of God, I *longed* to be.
Far up above the earth I traveled on . . .
And heard the whirring of Infinity!
I sensed the music of impending dawn,
And heard the angels chant a symphony.
Then on the way I saw Christ's shining face
Where longing worship swiftly carried me.
His joyous Love and glory filled all space!
God gave His son to bless eternally.
I woke enshrined in Bliss upon earth's sod,
And felt sweet Union with the Heart of God.

NOTICES AND COMMENT

NEW ADVISOR. We are happy to announce that Ray Allen Albert, of Blacksburg, Virginia, has accepted our invitation to be an advisor in the Southern Zone. Mr. Albert, who is married and the father of three grown children: twin sons and one daughter, has spent much of his time in journalism—printing, publishing, writing, travel, golf, etc. He came to our attention through some of his beautifully printed books of poems by Josephine H. Voracek, who became an advisor in the Central Zone at the end of last year. We feel he will be of great help to the Fellowship.

NEW BOOK. FIP Librarian Gordon Belding reports the acquisition of a new book, *ESSAYS IN AMERICAN THEOLOGY* by William J. McCutcheon; published by Philosophical Library Inc.; 1973; $12.50. Like all books in the Fellowship library, which is developing an interesting collection on the subject of *prayer*, this book is available on loan to any member requesting it. The library also boasts of many valuable volumes personally inscribed by their authors to the Fellowship and/or its staff.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES are three dollars per year—four dollars for subscriptions overseas. Back issues are available for thirty-five cents apiece. Special rates are made for copies in quantity. Remember that all contributions to the Fellowship are tax-deductible.

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MY SON

William S. Day

He is the seed of my loins,
the blood of my soul, and
the breath of my life
flows through his veins.

With shattering screams
his small arms flail
the cold, cold light,
which jolts his warm dreams.

The soft, furry robe
enwraps his ugly red body,
and he snuggles deep
into the comforting warmness.

His mother softly smiles,
surrounded by the aura that
is all love for her newborn son
and her husband.

And my son, the flesh of my flesh,
looks at me from his mother's arms,
and smiles.

IS AS IT WAS

Marion Freeman

up to the hilltop, down as the rain
cross over the meadow, rocks upside under
reach in for a blackberry, thorns without pain
walk the roads backwards, fields of corn plunder

come forward to ever, look back to the sea
mountains last calling, reach branches to tip
where ever whichever, a call will yes heed
fair haystacks are whirling, hot sun is to dip

ride now to hills over, small creatures lay under
old ladies churn butter, to the moon lovers ride
noise reigns as king, over lake voices thunder
quiet sounds split of crickets, at dusk by my side

the rhyme and the riddle, past future and present
the earth is in spinning, eat hot a steel spoon
hearth fire quit burning, red stars in the night
who ever did under the cow jump the moon

epilogue

to country quiet from city noise
speaks to child of grown up toys
sun and rain and moonless night
bring back to one a lost delight